

## **REMARKS**

Claims 1-34 are pending but stand rejected. Claims 1 and 18 have been amended. In view of the following remarks, the Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner's thoughtful reconsideration.

### ***Claim rejections – 35 USC §102 and 103:***

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-8, 11-14, 16, 18-25, 28-31, and 33 under §102 as being unpatentable over USPN 5,072,401 issued to Sansone. The Examiner rejected Claims 9, 10, 15, 17, 26, 27, 32, and 34 under §103 as being unpatentable over Sansone.

**Claim 1** is directed to a method of feed forward mail load notification to a carrier in a mass mailing operation and recites the following:

1. monitoring an actual mail production characteristic;
2. transmitting a mail load forecast to the carrier, the mail load forecast corresponding to a predicted number of mail pieces determined at least in part by the actual mail production characteristic; and
3. notifying the carrier of a change in said mail load forecast if said monitoring step indicates a variance in the mail production characteristic that can affect the accuracy of the transmitted mail load forecast.

In a prior response, the Applicant argues that teaches transmitting actual numbers to the Postal Service as opposed to a mail load forecast. The Applicant noted that the Specification distinguishes the term "forecast" from "actual numbers." See Specification, page 12, lines 22-24. The Specification notes that current daily production rates and levels represent actual numbers and not forecasts. The Specification notes that all gathered information (including the current daily production rates and levels) is correlated to produce a forecast for the present day, the subsequent

day, and with gradually decreasing confidence, all of the subsequent days for the following thirty day period. Specification, page 12, lines 22-29.

The Examiner responded by agreeing that the specification distinguishes actual load and forecast but concluding that the claims recite no such distinction. Based on the Examiner's comments, Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the term "forecast" corresponds to a predicted number of mail pieces determined at least in part by an actual mail production characteristic. This amendment finds support in the Specification at page 12, line 14 through page 13, line 12 and Figure 2.

As noted in the Applicant's prior response, It is clear from the passages relied upon by the Examiner that Sansone teaches transmitting actual numbers to the Postal Service as opposed to a mail load forecast. Consequently Sansone fails to teach or suggest transmitting a mail load forecast to the carrier where that mail load forecast corresponds to a predicted number of mail pieces determined at least in part by the actual mail production characteristic. As such, Sansone also fails to teach or suggest notifying the carrier of a change in said mail load forecast if said monitoring step indicates a variance in the mail production characteristic that can affect the accuracy of the mail load forecast.

For at least these reasons, Claim 1 is patentable over Sansone as are Claims 2-17 which depend from Claim 1.

**Claim 18** is directed to a system having various means for implementing the method of Claim 1. For at least the same reasons Claim 1 is patentable, so are Claim 18 and Claims 19-34 which depend from Claim 18.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Applicants respectfully and earnestly solicit early and favorable action allowing the Claims and passing the application to issue. The foregoing is believed to be a complete response to the outstanding Office Action.

Respectfully submitted,  
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